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Senate

(Legislative day of Friday, October 2, 1998)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, sovereign of history, who gives beginnings and ends to the phases of our work, on whom our mortal efforts depend, soon this hallowed Chamber will be silent for a time. The 105th Congress will be completed. Historians will write the human judgments of what has been accomplished, but You will have the final word about what has been achieved. It is Your affirmation that we seek. Senators in both parties have prayed to know and do Your will. Often there has been sharp disagreement on what is best for our Nation. Thank You for those times when debate led to deeper truth and compromise to the blending of aspects for a greater solution. We need that today. We remember those moving moments when we sensed Your presence, received supernatural power, and pressed on in spite of tiredness and tension. We need that today. Help us to forgive and forget any memories of strained relationships or debilitating differences. Preserve the friendships that reach across party lines. We need that today.

Father, help us to finish well. Give us strength to complete the work of this Congress with expeditious excellence. Renew the weary, reinforce the fatigued, rejuvenate the anxious. When it is all said and done, there is one last word we long to hear. It is Your divine accolade, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning to you.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this morning there will be 15 minutes remaining for debate on the religious freedom bill. At 9:45, under a previous order, the Senate will proceed to vote on the passage of the religious freedom bill. I commend Senator ARLEN SPECTER and Senator NICKLES and Senators on both sides of the aisle who have worked on this. I am sure Senator LIEBERMAN was involved, and others. I think this is a really fine accomplishment in the waning hours of this session of Congress.

Following that vote, the Senate may consider any available appropriations conference reports—we have at least one that I believe could be taken up, that is the Treasury-Postal Service bill—and any other legislative or executive items cleared for action. It is anticipated that we will move at some point today to the nomination of Mr. Paez from California, to be a judge for the Ninth Circuit. There is opposition, significant opposition to that nomination, so there will have to be some debate and I am sure a vote.

The Senate will also consider a continuing resolution or an omnibus appropriations bill, should they become available or when they become available. Members should expect, then, rollcall votes throughout today's session and into the evening. I thank my colleagues for their attention.

I might just note, last night a lot of good work was done in the wrapup, including approval of the intelligence authorization conference report and the water resources bill. This is a very sig-

nificant bill that is important to every State in the Nation. It had been tied up with various and sundry problems, but with a lot of hard work and a lot of cooperation, that bill was cleared. We hope, now, the House will take expeditious action and we can complete action on the water resources bill before we go out for the year. Also, we did the human resources reauthorization and the vocational education bill. When you couple higher education and vocational education, plus the Coverdell A+ bill that Congress passed, there has been a significant achievement this year in education. Even though the President vetoed the ability for people to save for their children's education, higher education and vocational education are two areas where we have completed our action and will be signed into law.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

A PRODUCTIVE BIRTHDAY FOR THE MAJORITY LEADER

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, the majority leader announced several things we accomplished yesterday. It was a pretty productive day. Today I hope will be even a more productive day. Because it is one of the last days of our legislative session, but also because it is the majority leader's birthday, we want it to be a very productive day.

FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION ACT OF 1998

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I think the regular order is we are back on the International Religious Freedom Act?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). If the Senator will suspend, the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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